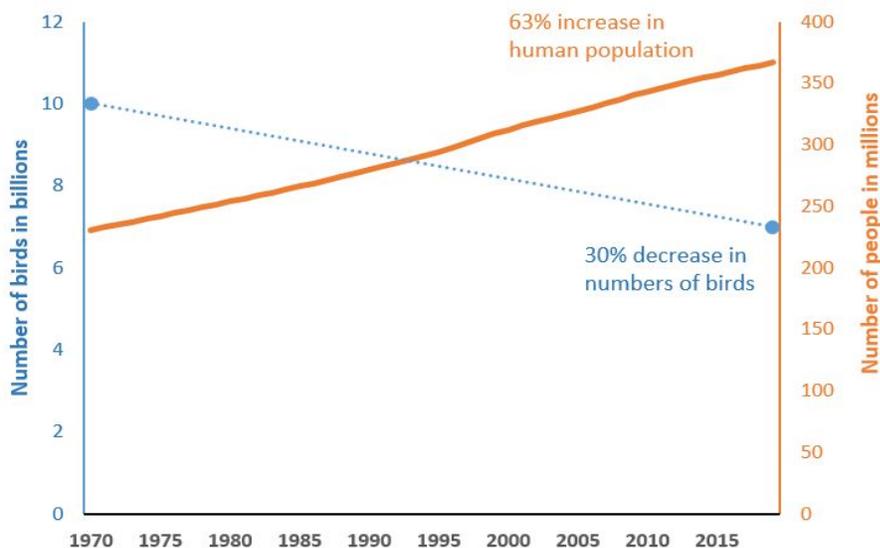




A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

The number of birds in our world is declining at alarming rates. Why?

According to John Kress, Senior Research Botanist and Curator of Botany at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, "...in North America, alone, three billion birds have gone missing over the last 50 years. [It is] estimated there were about 10 billion individual birds in North America in 1970. There are now about 7 billion. Individuals, populations and species are decreasing, and this is one of the major impacts of the Anthropocene on the planet."



North American Bird Loss - Patricia Derer, The Overpopulation Project

Many people think climate change is the main driver of bird deaths. It is not.

The main killers of birds are:

 - Window [collisions with buildings](#) (600 million birds deaths annually).

 -Domesticated and free-ranging cats ([2.4 billion birds](#) deaths annually).

 - Ingestion of human-produced trash, including plastics, ([42% of all seabird deaths](#)).

 -Long line fishing, which kills an estimated ([160,000 seabird deaths annually](#)).

 -[Communication Tower](#) collisions (6.6 million bird deaths in the US annually).

 - [Car collisions](#) account for (nearly 200 million bird deaths in the US annually).

 * -[Wind turbines](#) (235,000 bird deaths annually).

 -[US oil fields](#) (500,000 to 1 million bird deaths)

 -[Power line collisions and electrocutions](#) (31 million bird deaths annually).

 -Sport hunting in the US kills (about 15 million bird deaths annually).

Every expansion of humans and human activity reduces the population size of other species, raising their vulnerability and increasing their rate of extinction accordingly.

How do we stop the killing and loss of billions of birds that are not dying from climate change but from multiple causes from humanity's growth? Do we continue trying to address these symptoms individually and largely unsuccessfully instead of viewing them in their totality as to a common thread and cure? How can we use less land and reduce our environmental footprint when we add 80 million more people to the planet every year needing food, water, shelter and other goods and services?

If a blackbird was singing in the dead of night what do you think it would tell us?

Take our sunken eyes and learn to see.

- Terry Spahr, *Earth Overshoot*, terry@earthovershoot.org